

# Duarte's offer to rebels unexpected

After five years of civil war which has left over 59,000 people dead, El Salvador might be on the road to peace. During an address on Monday before the U.N. General Assembly, Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte invited guerrilla leaders in El Salvador to meet with him for peace negotiations.

Spokespersons for the coalition rebel group known as the Faribundo Marti Liberation Front and the Democratic Revolutionary Front, accepted the invitation and asked that President Belisario Betancur of Colombia act as mediator. The Colombian president promptly agreed.

This will be the first time since the civil war began that leaders of the government and rebel forces will meet for peace talks. Two previous requests by the guerrillas to start negotiations earlier this year were turned down by Duarte.

The meeting is scheduled to take place on Oct. 15 in the town of La Palma in northeastern El Salvador. Both sides have been asked to come without weapons or military back-ups.

While hopes are high that the meeting will yield positive results towards peace, there are some serious questions about the nature of Duarte's request. Why didn't Duarte make the invitation to meet with the rebels in private as is normally done in these matters, rather than announcing it at the United Nations with a big media display?

Also, why did Duarte pick the town of La Palma? To get there it is likely that rebel leaders in exile will have to first fly into San Salvador or Honduras where they would be easy targets for assassination.

The Salvadoran rebels have every reason to be suspicious of the meeting with Duarte. In 1980, several rebel leaders came to San Salvador to participate in elections at the invitation of the government. They ended up being kidnapped and killed by the military.

Despite the precarious circumstances surrounding Duarte's request, the meeting will be a hopeful moment for those who wish for peace in El Salvador. By agreeing to meet with Duarte, the rebels have confirmed their eagerness to bring an end to the civil war and to work out a political solution with the government. Whether Duarte is serious and whether he has the political control to back-up any promises he makes remains to be seen.

## Mopeds riders need to pay attention to rules

Five years ago mopeds were a rarity on campus. Today they can be found all around the University. This increase has resulted in a number of recent complaints.

Bicyclists have complained that mopeds speed along bike lanes, creating a danger to the slower moving bicycles. Pedestrians say that mopeds carelessly ride in and out of walkways between University buildings, and car drivers complain that mopeds regularly move between street and bike lanes, making it difficult to judge their actions.

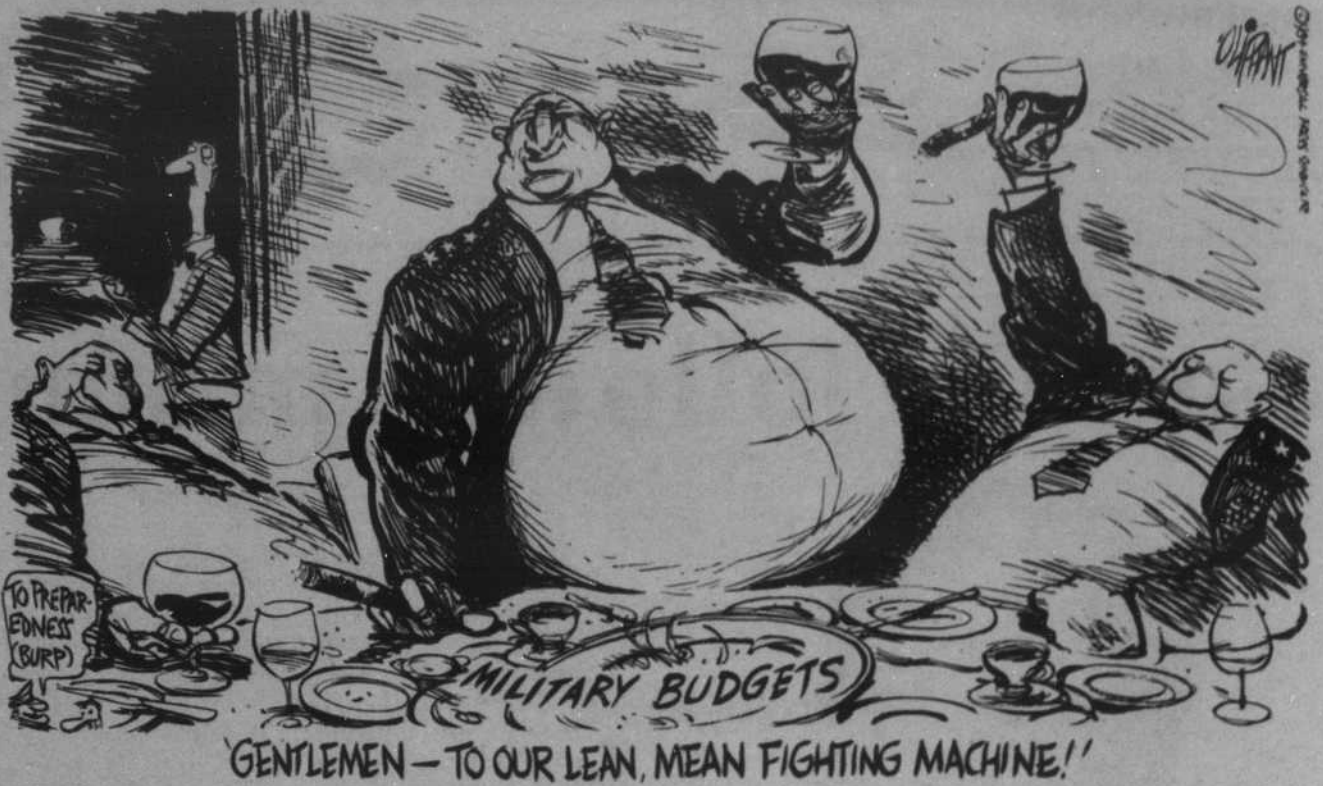
While mopeds can be a lot of fun and serve a useful purpose for those who own them, they must be used with care. Moped riders tend to see themselves as something between a car and a bike, and as a result they don't follow any one set of rules.

On East 13th Avenue between the EMU and Kincaid Street, moped owners have been riding up and down the road with little care that they are breaking the law. This portion of 13th Avenue is open only to bicycles and pedestrians. It was made that way after a truck hit and killed a student there fifteen years ago.

More and more students are making complaints about the use of mopeds in areas reserved for bicycles and pedestrians. Mopeds are motor vehicles and must follow the same set of road rules as a car or motorcycle. This means absolutely no mopeds on the closed section of 13th. To make sure that these rules are obeyed, campus security must step up its effort to ticket violators.

Bicyclists must also be careful. Many bicycle riders ignore the signs on campus that tell them where they must dismount and walk. Last year this resulted in several accidents when bicycles collided with students who were walking.

The campus can be a safe place for mopeds, bicycles, and pedestrians only if people are willing to follow the safety rules established by University students and the Administration.



## letters

### Check it out

Let's look at the facts and blow away the smoke from Reagan's record on crime. The Reagan Administration has a weak history of criminal prosecution, and a definite tendency of working against law enforcement. Specifically:

1. Today the U.S. has the highest crime rate of any industrialized democracy in the world. It is 20 times higher than Britain's, and 100 times that of Japan.
2. No active measures have been taken to protect the public from the repeated crimes of "career criminals."
3. White collar crime continues to expand with no significant Justice Department intervention.
4. Reagan Republicans proposed budget cuts in 1981 of 12% for law enforcement agencies like the FBI and Drug Enforcement Agency.
5. Reagan has cut drug and alcohol prevention-treatment programs by 25% in the past four years.
6. 50 individuals in the Reagan Administration have been charged with professional improprieties as public officials.
7. Newer crimes such as child pornography have flourished in America in the past four years.
8. All statistical declines in crime rates in America in the past four years have been linked to social factors having nothing to do with any Reagan Administration actions.
9. Organized crime influence

in business and government has proliferated.

This should make it very clear that the Reagan Administration can be expected, if re-elected, to continue its laissez-faire attitude on crime. Regardless of its get-tough talk, this Administration will continue to do nothing to make streets safer for average Americans. The only Americans safer today than they were four years ago are the criminals.

Kenneth Hacker  
Springfield

### Free speech

An event occurred last Thursday which might have been described as two groups exercising their right to freedom of speech. What occurred was one group attempting to exercise its right, while another group inevitably denied them that right.

The United States Marine Corp had set up a rather unimposing forum, out of the way of traffic. A military protest group appeared and set up their forum directly in front of the USMC table, in a manner which was

soon to block traffic. A debate arose quickly and with the gathering crowds easy access to the USMC table was closed. The Marines allowed the protest group to express themselves freely and uninhibitedly, while the protest group denied that same right to the Marines.

Free speech is one of the great myths in American today. Like a myth, it exists in our minds, but it is not to be found in the real world. Everyone seems willing to profess their support for the concept of free speech, but no one is willing to promote the practice of it.

Contrary to popular belief, as exemplified by students' actions, freedom of speech is not the right to out shout your neighbor if you disagree with them. The intolerance of this student body to allow opposing views to be expressed is what has killed free speech. We cannot arbitrate between who is and who is not to be heard. The moment you censor someone with your shouts, is the moment you become that person who you fear.

Donald Dysart  
Political Science

### letters policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed and signed, and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.

Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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